

## Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BERN

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 062998

EMBASSY FOR CAPE TOWN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, XG

SUBJECT: SWISS EMBASSY MINISTER HOHL DISCUSSES 25TH CPSU  
CONGRESS AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS

REFS: A. STATE 047812; B. STATE 056614; C. MOSCOW 3481

1. SUMMARY. SWISS EMBASSY MINISTER ALFRED HOHL PAID 40-  
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MINUTE CALL ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARMITAGE MARCH 12

TO DISCUSS DEVELOPMENTS AT 25TH PARTY CONGRESS, NEW APPROACHES OF THE PCI AND PCF, AND PROSPECTS FOR US-SOVIET RELATIONS IN THE AFTERMATH OF ANGOLA. DRAWING ON REFTELS, ARMITAGE EMPHASIZED THAT THE UNEVENTFUL CONGRESS WAS PRIMARILY A DEFENSE OF PAST ACTIONS AND NOT NOTABLE FOR INDICATIONS OF FUTURE POLICY LINES. THERE WAS, ARMITAGE SAID, A CLEAR AFFIRMATION OF IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE WEST AND OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SALT BUT REITERATED SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE.

2. IN GENERAL, HOHL SAW THE CONGRESS MAKING ONLY SMALL CHANGES TO DEMONSTRATE STABILITY AND UNITY TO AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE. OTHER MORE IMPORTANT CHANGES WOULD BE MADE AT THE NEXT CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING. HOHL, WHO WAS ASSIGNED TO MOSCOW IN 1960-62, WAS UNCERTAIN ABOUT SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ELEVATION OF ROMANOV TO FULL POLITBURO MEMBER-

SHIP, BUT FELT USTINOV'S NEW POSITION COULD BODE ILL FOR SALT AND DETENTE IN GENERAL. HOHL NOTED THAT CEAUSESCU'S SPEECH HAD BEEN SOFTER IN TONE THAN IN THE PAST. HE ALSO SEEMED TO THINK THE CONGRESS HAD IMPORTANT BUT UNSPECIFIED IMPLICATIONS FOR DUBCEK.

3. HOHL SOUGHT OUR VIEWS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES IN THE APPROACH OF THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTIES. HE CITED TWO THEORIES AND ASKED TO WHICH WE SUBSCRIBED. ONE HELD THE CHANGES AS TACTICAL TO CALM THE PUBLIC BEFORE THE NEXT ELECTION. THUS, BREZHNEV'S LONG TALKS WITH BERLINGUER AND PLISSONIER AFTER THE CONGRESS MAKE MOSCOW'S VOCIFEROUS CONCERNS APPEAR AS ONLY A FACADE. THE SECOND THEORY SEES MOSCOW AS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED, AND WEIGHTS HEAVILY THE INFLUENCE OF PURISTS LIKE SUSLOV WHO REGARD DROPPING THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AS A MAJOR SIN. ARMITAGE REPLIED THAT WE TEND MORE TOWARD THE SECOND VIEW, AND NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS MAY BE FACED WITH A DIFFICULT AND AS YET UNANSWERED QUESTION OF WHETHER TO GO ALONG WITH THE NEW APPROACHES OR TRY TO SPLIT THE PARTIES. HOHL OBSERVED THAT THIS WAS PROBABLY WHY THE SOVIETS HAD NOT HAD SUCCESS IN ARRANGING A MEETING OF EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES. HE ALSO SAID THAT INCLUSION OF THE PCI IN AN

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ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TREMENDOUS IMPACT IN EAST EUROPE, AND ADDED THAT IN THIS MATTER SECRETARY KISSINGER WAS TOO APOCALYPTIC. ARMITAGE SAID WE COULD NOT IGNORE THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF COMMUNISTS IN NATO COUNTRY GOVERNMENTS ON THE SECURITY OF NATO MEMBERS INCLUDING OURSELVES.

4. ON ANGOLA AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS, HOHL ASKED IF WE SAW DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENTS, SUCH AS A SUDDEN, MASSIVE AIRLIFT

OF CUBANS INTO RHODESIA OR MOZAMBIQUE, WHICH WOULD LEAD TO  
US REACTIONS IN SALT OR UNDER THE GRAIN AGREEMENT.  
ARMITAGE REPLIED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE UNLIKELY TO WANT  
OUR RELATIONS TO DETERIORATE, THAT SALT WOULD BE THE LAST  
AREA FOR US TO REACT ON, AND THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD ONLY  
TIGHTEN THEIR BELTS IF WE SOUGHT TO USE GRAIN AS LEVERAGE.  
IT WAS OUR HOPE THAT AFRICAN STATES WOULD BE RESISTANT TO  
FURTHER OUTSIDE INTRUSION INTO AFRICAN AFFAIRS. KISSINGER

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